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Build your dream home

Step-by-step secrets to designing and building with confidence

From disclosure to staging

A sellers' guide to going to market

Spring reset

Easy cleaning hacks to refresh your entire home

Garage makeover magic

Turn wasted space into stylish, organised living in a weekend

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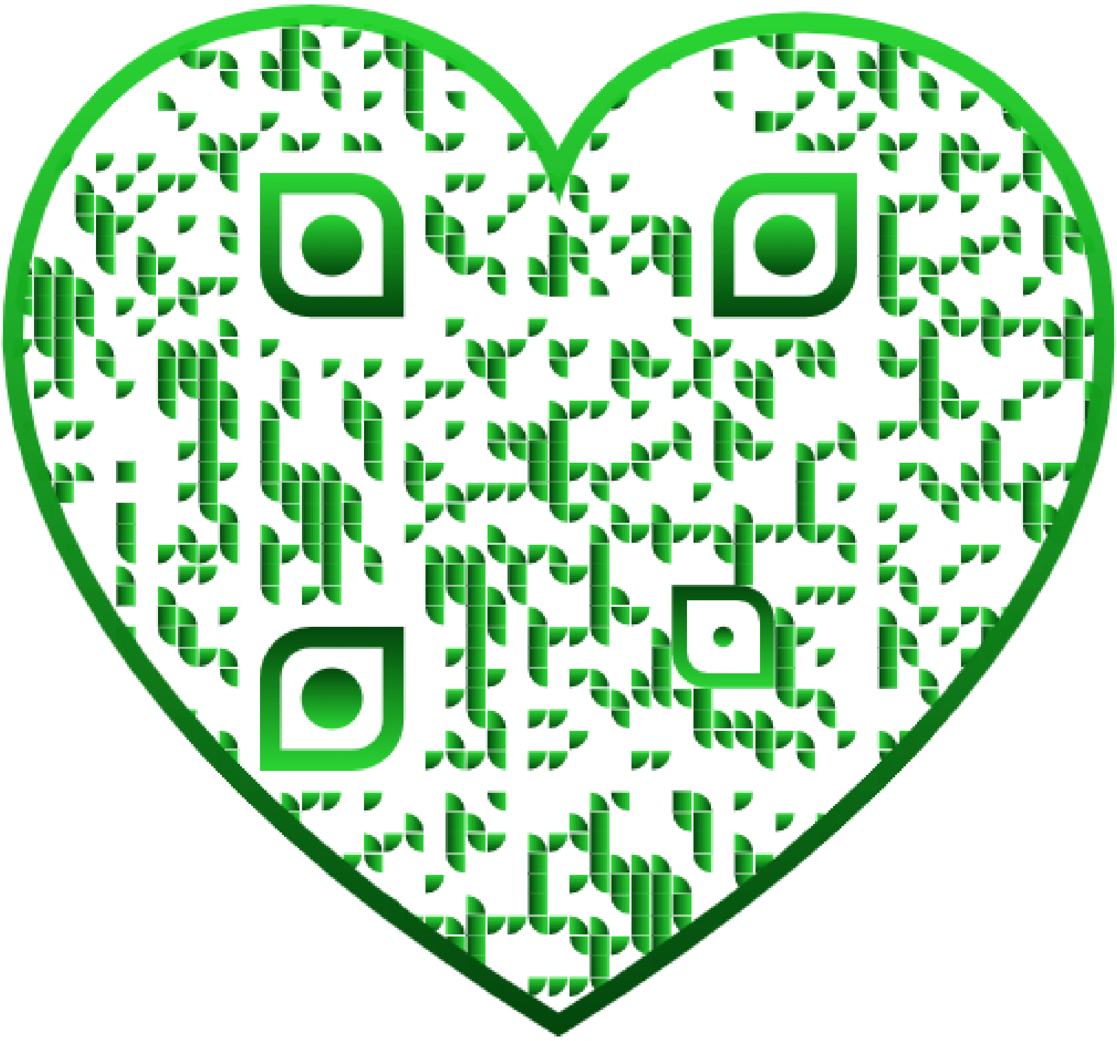

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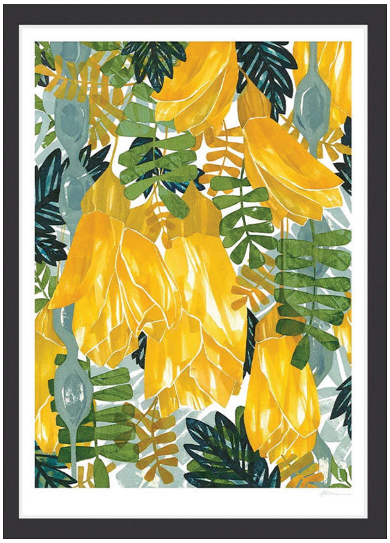
Lifestyles

By Ben O'Connell



KOWHAI ART PRINT

Printed in Aotearoa on acid-free paper with archival inks, this lush, textured art print honours the kōwhai tree. Tāmaki Makaurau-based artist Holly Roach's playful, interdisciplinary style explores abstract memories and joyful mistakes.

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BUILD& RENOVATE TODAY

FROM THE GROUP EDITOR

Welcome to the latest issue of Build & Renovate Today!

As the year unfolds, we're excited to bring you stories that inspire, inform, and celebrate the spaces we call home. From the first steps of building your dream house to the finer touches of colour, texture, and design, this issue is packed with ideas to help you create environments that truly reflect your lifestyle.

Our cover story brings you practical advice for finding the right professionals to bring your vision to life. For trend-watchers, our feature on Kaboodle's calming Down to Earth palette shows how natural tones can transform your interiors. If you're ready for a seasonal refresh, check out our clever spring cleaning tips, and don't miss our guide on transforming your garage to be much more than a carpark.

Wherever you are on your build or renovation journey, we hope this issue inspires fresh possibilities for your home.

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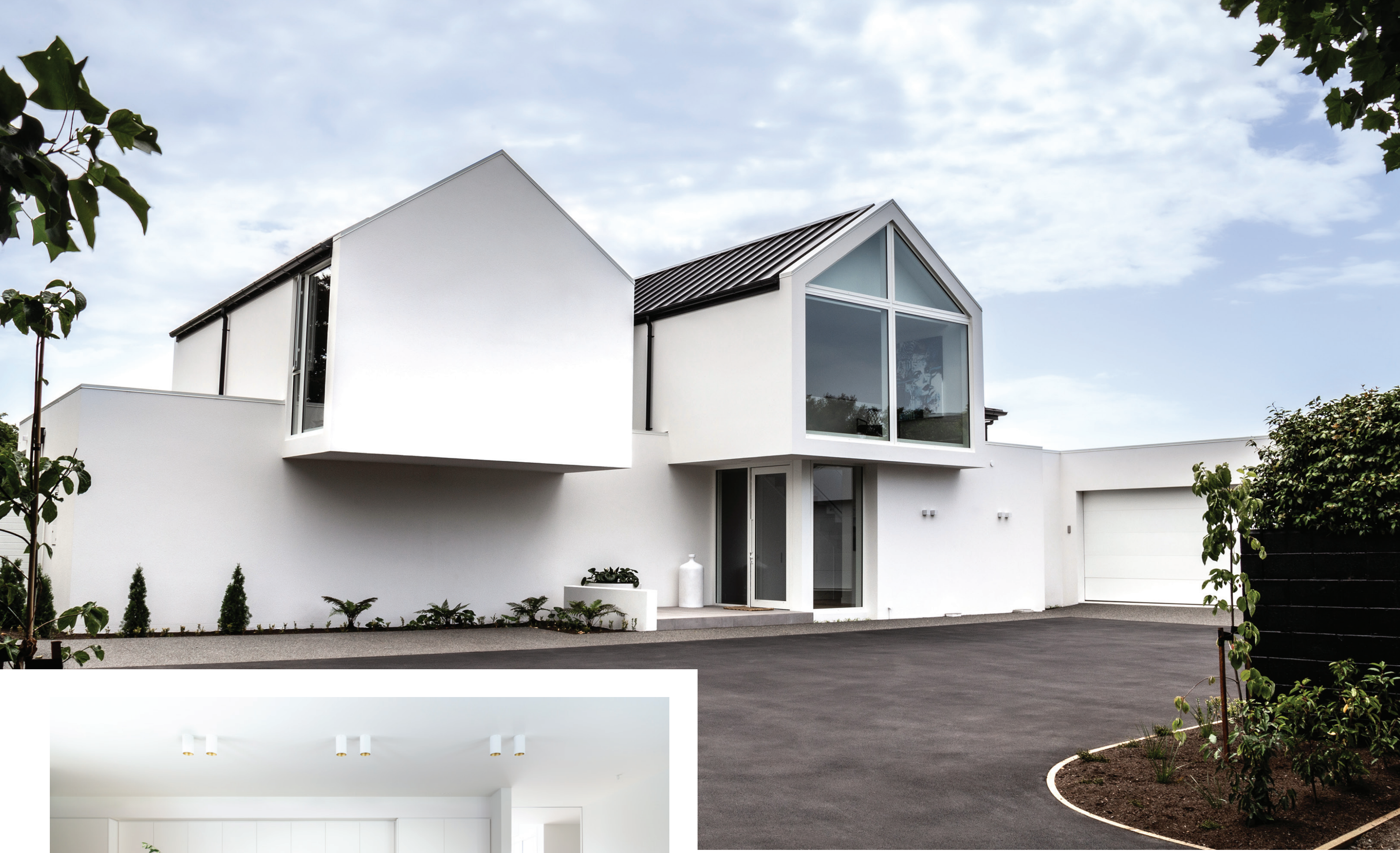
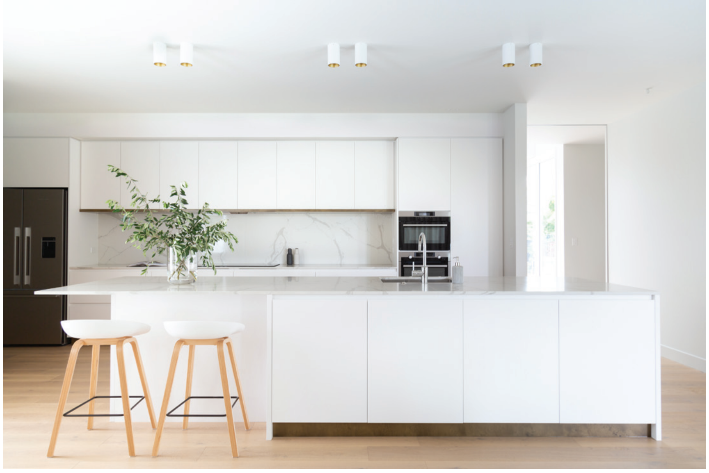
Seamless *sophistication*

Creating connections between indoor and outdoor living is far more than a design concept; it's a lifestyle all in itself, and it's where this thoughtfully designed home truly shines.





From the tree-lined driveway and formal entry to the generously landscaped grounds, there is a proportionality of space and a seamless flow from interior to exterior, which creates a cohesive sense of space and place.

Inside, the kitchen stands out for its simple layout and restrained palette, creating a functional, uncluttered yet interesting area. Contemporary detailing, feature lighting, and a discreet scullery contribute to a space that is both practical and refined, seamlessly connecting with the living areas to form a central hub for the home.

The bathroom reveals a similarly considered approach, with clean lines, minimalist detailing, and subtle lighting combining to create a calm and functional space. Though the design appears simple, it carefully balances form and function, with close attention paid to proportion and finish.

Built by Fleetwood Construction, it won the Kitchen Excellence Award, Plumbing World Bathroom Excellence Award and, Outdoor Living Excellence Award at the RMB House of the Year Awards.

Viewed as a whole, this Christchurch home embodies a clear vision of combining high-quality construction, thoughtful layout, and well-executed design elements, resulting in a practical and visually stunning place.

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Trend watch

Kaboodle's new 'Down to Earth' range feels like home

By Jamie Quinn

If there's one thing we could all use a little more of, it's calm. Between the constant buzz of modern life and the endless to-do lists, home should be the one place where you can truly take a breath. That's exactly what Kaboodle had in mind when creating their latest Trends Range, called Down to Earth.

But this isn't just a splash of new colour for colour's sake. This new collection is all about grounding tones, soft textures, and that sense of "ahhh" you get when you walk into a space that just feels right.

Backed by two years of global and local research, the range is the result of the Kaboodle team tracking shifts in design thinking, attending major events like EuroCucina in Milan, and absorbing insights from industry leaders like WGSN. The result? A carefully curated palette that feels timeless yet undeniably current.

"We're not just following trends, we're anticipating them," says Kaboodle marketing manager John Harrison. "By tapping into global conversations and local creative voices, we've built a range that feels timeless but totally of the moment."

This is a range for people who want their home to feel calm, lived-in, and inviting. The colour palette is inspired by nature's grounding elements: think clay, stone, moss, and sand. These hues aren't loud or flashy, they're designed to feel, not just be seen.

"The colours we live with shape how we feel," says Harrison. "This palette invites mindfulness and presence. It helps make home a place to reset."

With wellness and mental clarity becoming key drivers in interior design, Kaboodle's trend-forward, yet comforting colours tap into a universal need for spaces that soothe.

Kaboodle has also made it easy for homeowners to explore and experiment with these new tones. Their free online design planner tool lets you visualise the palette in your space, helping you make decisions with confidence.

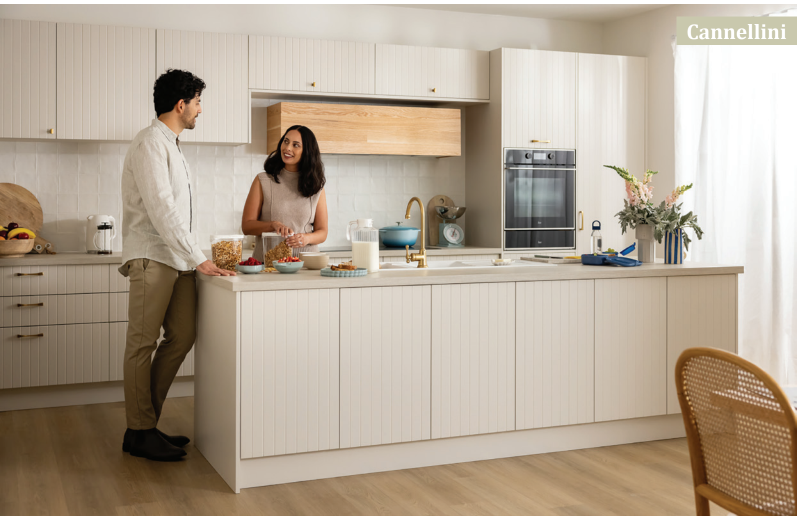
Whether you're starting from scratch or updating a few key pieces, Down to Earth gives you the flexibility to create something that's both beautiful and personal.

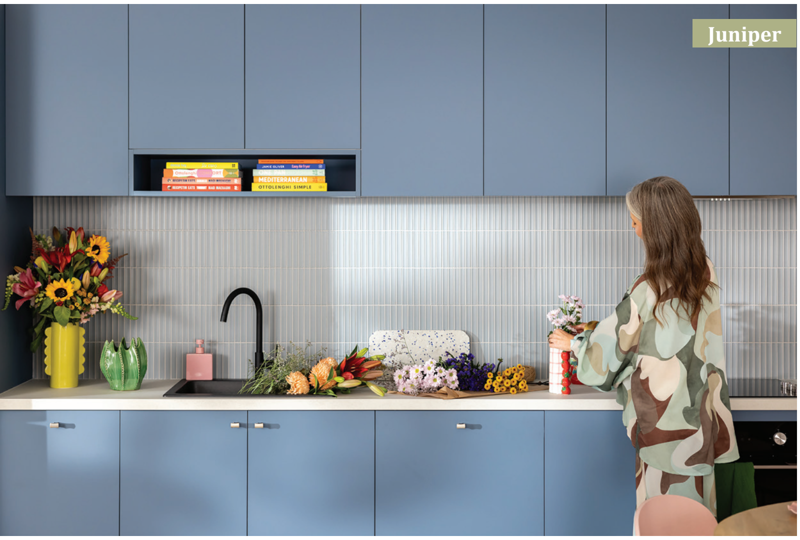
To explore the full collection or try the planner, visit kaboodle.co.nz.

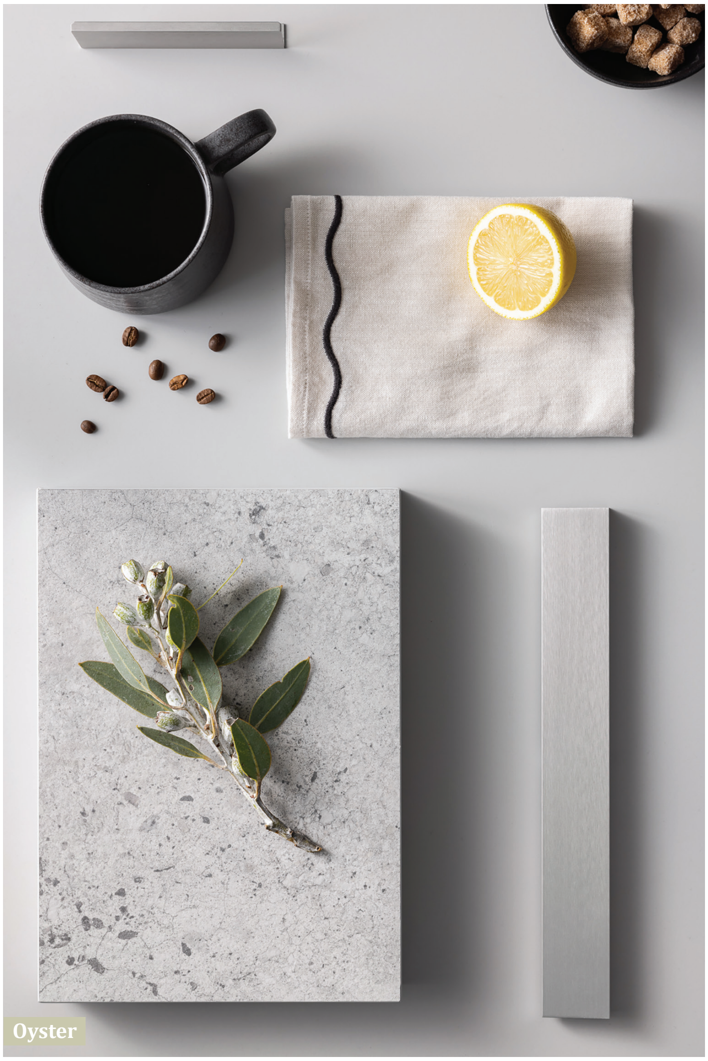
Photos supplied by Kaboodle Kitchens

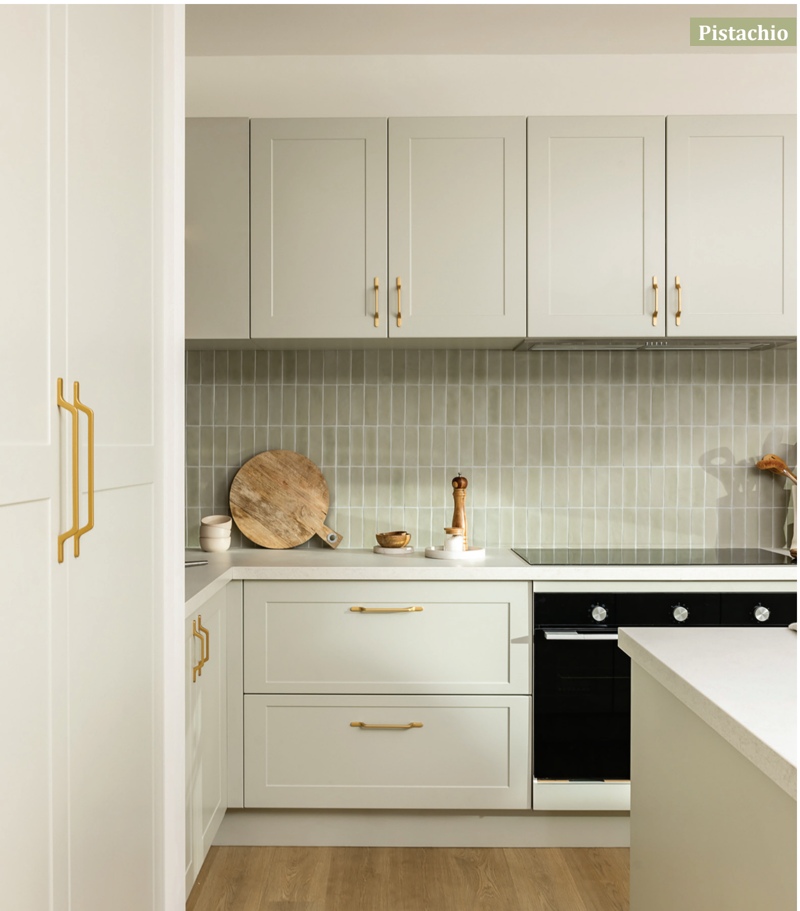
Saltbush

Truffle Oak









Meet the colours

Each shade in the Down to Earth collection carries its own personality and purpose. Whether you're designing a full kitchen or refreshing a laundry or home office, there's something in this range that invites connection and calm:

Oyster – A gentle, soft grey with subtle silver undertones. It's clean, minimalist, and perfect for anyone chasing serene simplicity.

Saltbush – An earthy, muted green that feels both luxurious and understated. This one adds a natural warmth without overwhelming a space.

Juniper – A misty blue that leans into calming grey. Think ocean haze on a quiet morning, ideal for a tranquil home oasis.

Cannellini – A sandy beige that instantly warms up a room. It's soft, grounding, and incredibly versatile.

Pistachio – A fresh, green-grey hue that strikes a balance between contemporary edge and natural energy.

Truffle Oak – A timber-look finish with deep cool tones and textured woodgrain. Decadent yet earthy, this is for those who love timeless elegance with a twist.

Dream homes built to last

When it comes to turning ideas into finely crafted realities, Glenn Wilkinson Builder Ltd (GWB) is the team that consistently delivers. Based in Kākā Point and serving The Catlins and the greater South Otago region, this family-owned business has been building luxury custom homes, extensions, renovations, and farm building repairs since 2007.

Glenn himself brings over 23 years of carpentry expertise. After starting as an apprentice straight out of school, he launched GWB within five years and now leads a solid team that includes qualified builders, apprentices in training, and attentive administrative support. They believe great communication and a relaxed, client-focused attitude make all the difference, working as partners from design through to final finishes.

Whether it's a brand-new luxury build overlooking the coast, a sympathetic renovation of a classic home, or practical farm-building repairs, GWB's approach remains the same: quality-first, time-efficient, and tailored to your vision. They combine state-of-the-art materials with tried-and-true techniques that withstand South Otago's variable climate, particularly in coastal environments.

What really shines in every project is the attention to detail. Clients consistently praise Glenn's approachable and easy-going style, as well as how his team adapts to changes without drama.

Imagine waking up in a custom-built home with that perfect blend of comfort, craftsmanship, and coastal character. Think seamless renovations that feel like they've always been a part of the space. With GWB, you're not just hiring a builder; you're gaining a trusted partner who will keep you informed, respect your time and budget, and make your building journey feel smooth.

So if you're ready to bring your dream to life, Glenn Wilkinson Builder Ltd is the local South Otago builder who truly has the experience, passion, and down-to-earth approach to make it happen. Contact for a consultation today at gwb.co.nz and discover how they can help build your future.

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Lizzy Ryley takes REINZ helm

Newly appointed REINZ chief executive Lizzy Ryley.

The Real Estate Institute of New Zealand (REINZ) has welcomed Lizzy Ryley as its new Chief Executive, marking a new chapter of leadership for the organisation.

Ryley brings extensive experience leading customer-centric, data-driven, and membership-based organisations in both New Zealand and abroad. Her appointment comes at a pivotal time for the real estate sector, with REINZ poised to build on its momentum and explore new opportunities.

"I'm excited to be joining REINZ and to contribute to a profession that plays such a vital role in communities across Aotearoa," says Ryley. "REINZ has a proud history and a clear purpose. I look forward to working with the team and our members to continue shaping a trusted, future-ready industry."

REINZ Chair Kevin Jenkins says the Board is confident Ryley's background positions her strongly to lead the organisation forward.

"Lizzy brings a deep understanding of how to create value for members through innovation, insight, and operational excellence," Jenkins says. "Her leadership during transformative periods—particularly at Flybuys—demonstrated her ability to modernise systems, drive engagement, and deliver results."

Prior to joining REINZ, Ryley held senior executive roles at Woolworths Group in both New Zealand and Australia, focusing on marketing, loyalty, CSR, and data strategy. She has also worked in the UK with global FMCG and retail companies

and held roles in academic business leadership.

Property market steady

REINZ June figures have revealed a relatively stable market, and while there have been increases in the number of sales compared to June 2024, the median price remained unchanged.

The median price for New Zealand was steady year-on-year at $770,000. Excluding Auckland, the median price increased by 1.7% year-on-year to reach $691,500. Auckland experienced a further decline year-on-year, decreasing by 3.4% to $990,000.

Ten out of the 16 regions reported an increase in median prices compared to June 2024. The most significant increase was seen on the West Coast, up 35.5% from $310,000 to $420,000. Southland reached a record high in its median price, reaching $502,500 – the first record median price in any region since January.

"We're seeing a market that is steady on the surface but with some movement underneath at a regional level. The unchanged national median price suggests stability, yet this reflects contrasting regional dynamics, with some areas experiencing renewed growth year-on-year," Lizzy says.

The number of properties sold across the country increased by 20.3% year-on-year, increasing from 4,877 to 5,865. When excluding Auckland, sales increased by 21.4%, from 3,371 to 4,091. Looking to the regions, the highest year-on-year increase was recorded in Gisborne, which saw a 70.0% increase (from 20 to 34 sales). Other regions with notable sales increases included Southland (+34.9%), Bay of Plenty (+33.3%) and Marlborough (+32.7%).

> "I'm excited to be joining REINZ and to contribute to a profession that plays such a vital role in communities across Aotearoa."

"June is typically a quieter month for real estate, and while the seasonal slowdown was expected, sales came in slightly below typical early winter levels. Nationally, seasonally adjusted sales fell by around five per cent, suggesting some caution in the market, but compared to this time last year, sales remain significantly stronger overall," says Ryley.

Looking at properties coming to market, New Zealand saw a 2.5% decline in listings compared to June 2024, totalling 7,612 listings. Excluding Auckland, there was also a decrease in listings, down 3.3% to 4,700. Inventory levels across the country, however, continue to rise, increasing by 2.0% year-on-year to 32,384 properties available for sale.

Nationally, there were 676 auction sales reported in June 2025, representing 11.5% of all sales. For New Zealand, excluding Auckland, there were 315 auction sales, which were 7.7% of all sales. The median number of days to sell for New Zealand increased by three days to 50 days. Excluding Auckland, it rose by four days to reach a median of 50 days as well.

"While properties are still selling, the increase in median days to sell indicates that buyers are taking a more considered approach. This shift probably reflects a broader sense of caution, with many buyers feeling they have the time to explore their options, especially with the amount of choice they have," she adds.

"Most vendors are entering the market with realistic price expectations and a willingness to adapt to current conditions, especially those motivated to sell. However, many are receiving offers below their anticipated value, prompting some to delay listing, or relisting, until spring or summer, when market activity may show signs of improvement."

The House Price Index (HPI) for New Zealand is currently at 3,580, showing a year-on-year increase of 0.3% and a decrease of 0.8% compared to May 2025. Over the past five years, the average annual growth rate of New Zealand's HPI has been 3.9%.

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Building a dream home

By Shelley Sweeney

How to find the right professionals for your project

Building a home can often be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a space that reflects your individuality and lifestyle. While purchasing a section is the first big step, it's important to choose the right team to bring your vision to life.

From selecting your architect or designer to engaging a trusted builder, every decision contributes to the success of your project. With clear goals and professional support, your dream home can become a reality.

Start with your vision

Before engaging professionals, it's important to have a clear idea of what you want in a home. Consider your budget, the size and style of the house, and how it will suit your section. Factors like sun orientation, site slope, and council zoning rules will influence your design. It's worth researching what's allowed under your local council regulations, zoning and site restrictions to avoid surprises later.

For Tania Moore and her family who have two labradors, a small dog and eight horses, finding a rural site was key. The busy family wanted to be surrounded by nature within easy distance to the city. Finding their hillside site in Westmorland gave them the best of both worlds.

"We bought the section because it was rolling land and we wanted to build the house on top of the hill, which has wonderful views of the mountains," says Tania.

Choosing an architect or designer

Once you have your section, the next step is to bring in a professional who can turn your ideas into a workable design. You can choose between a registered architect, architectural designer, or a design-and-build company.

Registered architects provide a highly tailored design service, often suited to complex sites or unique homes. Architects usually handle more complex or bespoke projects, where design creativity, site challenges, or high-end finishes are required. They are generally more expensive due to the higher level of training, regulation, and complexity of service provided.

Architectural Designers and draftspeople may offer a more affordable option for less complex sites and builds. These professionals can design residential and many commercial buildings. They often focus on residential homes, renovations, and smaller projects.

Design-and-build companies often work with architectural designers and streamline the process by combining design, pricing, and construction under one roof. This process can be simplified even further with a range of off-the-shelf plans with customisable options.

When choosing a designer for your new home, ask to see portfolios of past work, check credentials, and ensure you feel comfortable with their communication style.

With this hillside home, Tania's research was simplified by choosing an architect who had designed several houses for a friend. Seeing these completed designs along with having a strong recommendation gave Tania the confidence to start the design process.

"We took what we wanted on paper to the architect and then

> **“We chose a builder who was also recommended and they have been incredible always keeping us informed on the progress and financial side of the build. I would recommend going with an independent builder again.”**
>
> *- Tania Moore*

with their knowledge they helped us with the finer details,” says Tania. “They were amazing throughout the whole process and gave us a lot of great ideas.”

At the top of Tania’s wish list was a generous kitchen and living space as well as making the most of the views of the mountains and outdoor areas.

Consents and compliance

Your chosen design professional will prepare detailed plans and lodge a building consent application with your local council. This step ensures your home meets the latest Building Code regulations. Consent approval times can vary, so it’s wise to factor this into your timeline.

It’s worth noting that the design process can take longer with custom home designs on complex sites. In Tania’s case, the design process took around 14 months to draw up before being submitted to the council.

Engaging a builder

After your concept plans are developed, you’ll need to secure a Licensed Building Practitioner. Many homeowners request quotes from several builders before making a decision. Much like finding the right designer, make sure you choose a builder who has experience with the type of home you want. Check their availability and timeline for the project and make sure there is transparency around pricing. Some people prefer a full contract build, where the builder manages everything, while others choose a labour-only contract, sourcing materials and subcontractors themselves.

Tania and her partner chose an independent builder for their architect designed home. “We chose a builder who was also recommended and they have been incredible always keeping us informed on the progress and financial side of the build” says Tania. “I would recommend going with an independent builder again.” Tania also recommends visiting a lot of show homes for inspiration. This way you will be ready to start the design process with a clear wish list of what to include in your dream home.

Bring your home out of hibernation

Declutter and organise for a fresh spring start

By Jamie Quinn

Spring is in the air! The days are getting longer, flowers are starting to bloom, and suddenly there's this itch to open up the windows and give your place a bit of love. While spring cleaning often conjures images of frantic scrubbing and decluttering, it's actually an opportunity to revitalise your home and prepare it for the months ahead.

Let's face it, winter can be tough on our homes. Between wet shoes, soggy leaves, and general hibernation mode, things can start to feel a bit... tired. And there are always those jobs we put off because, well, life. That greasy stovetop? The light fixtures gathering dust? Yeah, we see them. But spring's the perfect excuse to finally get stuck in.

Start small, start somewhere, and don't aim for perfection. Just give your home some attention. It's amazing what a bit of elbow grease can do, not just for your space but for your mindset too.

Beyond the obvious deep cleaning, spring is also a great time to focus on home maintenance. A little preventative care now can save you from bigger problems later. From checking for drafts to ensuring your appliances are running smoothly, these tasks will not only protect your home but also enhance your comfort and enjoyment.

The kitchen's a great place to begin. It's the heart of the home and tends to cop the most mess. Show your appliances some love; they've worked hard all year. Pull out the stove (carefully!), unplug it, and give the area behind and underneath a good clean with warm soapy water. Keep an eye out for any signs of pests, better to catch those early.

Ovens can be a real challenge. Spills and splatters can turn into smoky nightmares if not addressed quickly. Here's a handy trick: sprinkle salt over the mess immediately. It works like magic to stop the smoking and makes clean-up a breeze once the oven has cooled down.

As for the microwave, if it's looking a little worse for wear, pop a bowl of water in there and microwave it for a few minutes. The steam loosens all the stuck-on gunk so you can just wipe it away with a cloth.

Next stop: the bedroom. Our bedding takes a beating throughout the year, so it's important to refresh it regularly. Depending on the fabric, you can revitalise your comforters, pillowcases, and sheets with a hot wash using baking soda, white vinegar, and laundry detergent. Mattresses and pillows can also benefit from a good clean. Sprinkle baking soda on top, let it sit for a couple of hours, then vacuum it up to eliminate odours. For stubborn stains or lingering smells, consider using a steam cleaner. If you've got a steam cleaner, now's a good time to bring it out. Just make sure everything's completely dry before you remake the bed.

> **The kitchen's a great place to begin. It's the heart of the home and tends to cop the most mess. Show your appliances some love; they've worked hard all year.**

Finally, let's talk about windows. There's nothing better than sunlight streaming through freshly cleaned glass. Wipe down the frames first, then give the panes a once-over with a good glass cleaner. Suddenly, everything feels brighter.

Remember, spring cleaning isn't about achieving a spotless home. It's about hitting reset, clearing out the clutter – both physical and mental, and making your space feel like you again.

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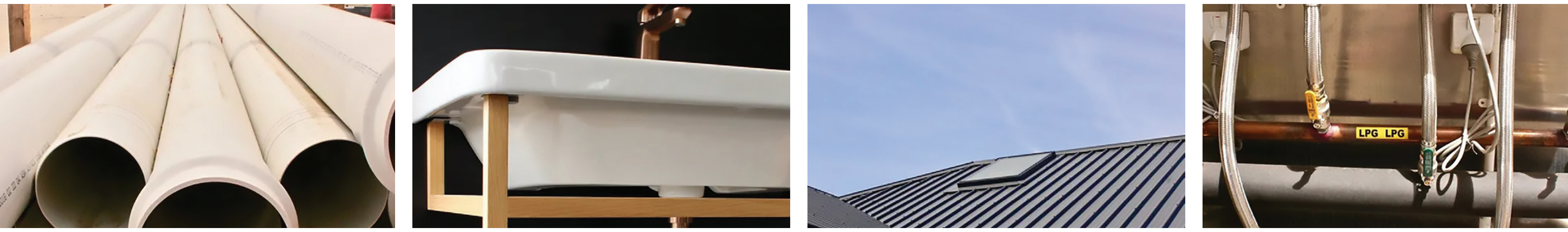

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Customers often comment on how smooth and fuss-free the experience is. One client said Jase turned up on time and had the scaffold up faster than expected, with great communication throughout. Another praised the team for being able to deliver chimney access at short notice, just as promised. Many return for multiple projects, knowing they can count on the same reliable service and solid equipment each time.

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From disclosure to staging

A seller's guide with REA

Belinda Moffat is the Chief Executive of the Real Estate Authority (REA), the independent government agency that regulates the conduct of real estate professionals in New Zealand. REA produces the website settled.govt.nz, which is designed to inform and guide consumers through the real estate transaction process from thinking of buying or selling, right through to moving in or out. For information about what to expect when working with a real estate professional, visit rea.govt.nz.

What are the minimum legal requirements sellers need to be aware of when listing their property?

"Buying or selling a home is likely to be one of the biggest financial transactions most people will make in their lifetime. There is a significant legal component to the process, and it's important to understand your rights and obligations.

"REA recommends engaging a lawyer or conveyancer early in the sale process. They'll help with preparing and reviewing agreements, handling the transfer of funds, and advising through the sale. Every home and every transaction is different, which is one reason professional advice is so important. However, here are a few of the legal basics you should know:

- You should disclose any known issues that could affect the buyer, which may include things like weather-tightness problems or other property defects, unconsented alterations, issues with the property title or planned developments nearby that might affect views or access. You don't need to advertise these defects, but if you fail to make the proper disclosures to the ultimate buyer before you sign a sale and purchase agreement, you could put the sale in jeopardy and potentially face costly legal issues.
- If you use a real estate agency to help sell your home, you'll need to sign an agency agreement, which is a binding contract between you. This should be reviewed carefully, with the help of your lawyer or conveyancer, before signing. The agency agreement will include information such as accurate property details, including chattels and defects, the type of agency (sole or general) and its duration, plus commission rates and any fees (e.g. for marketing & advertising), broken down clearly. You can negotiate what's in an agency agreement before you sign.

  Licensed real estate professionals are legally obliged to disclose known defects to buyers. If you instruct them not to disclose a serious issue, under the Code of Conduct overseen by the Real Estate Authority, they're required to terminate their agency agreement with you.
- As part of the process, you will need to sign a sale and purchase agreement. This document places a number of legal responsibilities on you, such as vendor warranties, the date on which you must settle the transaction, and the provision of the keys. It is important that you read this document carefully and obtain legal advice on it before you sign.
- All property transactions in New Zealand are undertaken in accordance with the Land Transfer Act, and the Property Law Act may also apply. This governs how the title in the property is transferred to another person. As we have said, it is important to engage your lawyer or conveyancing professional early so that they can guide you through the process."

> "You will want to present your property in its best light, in a way that people can see themselves living in it. We recommend decluttering, cleaning and ensuring that everything is in good working order.

What are your recommendations when it comes to decluttering or depersonalising a space before viewings?

"You will want to present your property in its best light, in a way that people can see themselves living in it. We recommend decluttering, cleaning and ensuring that everything is in good working order. If it is not, then you will need to disclose this to potential buyers. Whether you choose to fix all issues or sell on an 'as-is where-is' basis is something you should discuss with your real estate professional and lawyer.

"Removing clutter can make your home look larger and potentially more appealing. For storing items you want to keep but are adding clutter, consider a storage unit or organised boxes in the garage. Remember to declutter cupboards too – buyers will check storage during open homes. Tidy, organised cupboards suggest that the rest of the house is well looked after.

"Once decluttered, a thorough cleaning of every room will help your home look its best for photos and open homes. You may want to look at steam-cleaning carpets or hiring professional cleaners. It's also a good time to take care of little things you may have been putting off, like leaking taps, broken drains, sticking doors, tired and light switches.

"It is also important to ensure that anything of financial or sentimental value is carefully packed away. During the sale process, you may have open homes and many people in and out of your house. You might want to take valuable items such as jewellery or technology items with you during open homes."

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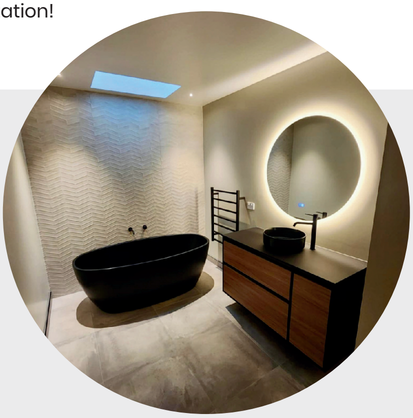

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> **“First impressions matter to buyers, and that starts with the exterior of the home. Mow lawns, sweep paths, weed gardens, and mulch for neatness. Wash exteriors and windows; ensure fences, gates, and letterboxes are clean and functional. “**

Should sellers invest in renovations before listing their property for sale? How far should they go?

“When it comes to major renovations pre-sale, it’s important for sellers to think carefully about cost and whether they will recoup the investment. With big jobs like modernising a kitchen or bathroom, sellers should budget carefully to manage costs. A real estate professional or valuer may be able to give you advice on what renovations are likely to improve your return. Make sure you’re fully aware of the consent and compliance requirements in your area for any major renovation work you undertake and that you obtain the proper documentation to demonstrate that compliance to potential buyers.”

How important is the first impression when it comes to buyers, and what key elements influence that?

“First impressions matter to buyers, and that starts with the exterior of the home. Mow lawns, sweep paths, weed gardens, and mulch for neatness. Wash exteriors and windows; ensure fences, gates, and letterboxes are clean and functional. Something as simple as a fresh coat of paint on the front door, a new doormat, or a pot plant can make the entrance inviting and have potential buyers in a positive frame of mind before they walk through your door.”

Is there an ideal time of year to sell a home in New Zealand, or does it depend more on property type and location?

“Many people choose to sell their homes in spring and summer when there is good light and the property is at its best, and people are more likely to be out and about. Prospective buyers may have a little more time over the summer to go to open homes and do their research, and it is said that good weather can put people in a good mood, which may help motivate buyers. But ultimately, vendors will choose when it is right for them, and that is often dictated by life events and the reason for the sale.”

How does staging impact the success of a sale, and is it always necessary?

“Staging your home is an option to consider. It can be useful if your furniture is looking a little tired or dated. Staging can make your home look well styled and appealing, and it also de-personalises the property (by removing personal photos and ‘lived-in’ items), which can help prospective buyers picture themselves as owners. Bear in mind what staging will cost, noting that you may need to hire a storage unit for anything you’re removing from the home.

Increasingly, we are seeing the use of AI-generated staging in marketing materials. We have recently issued guidance to real estate professionals, reminding them of the care that needs to be taken when using AI tools. The AI-enhanced photo needs to be a true representation of the actual home, and ought to also state whether or not the photos are AI-generated. To avoid any issues, we encourage all buyers to personally inspect the property, or for someone they trust to do so. This ensures there are no surprises on settlement day.”

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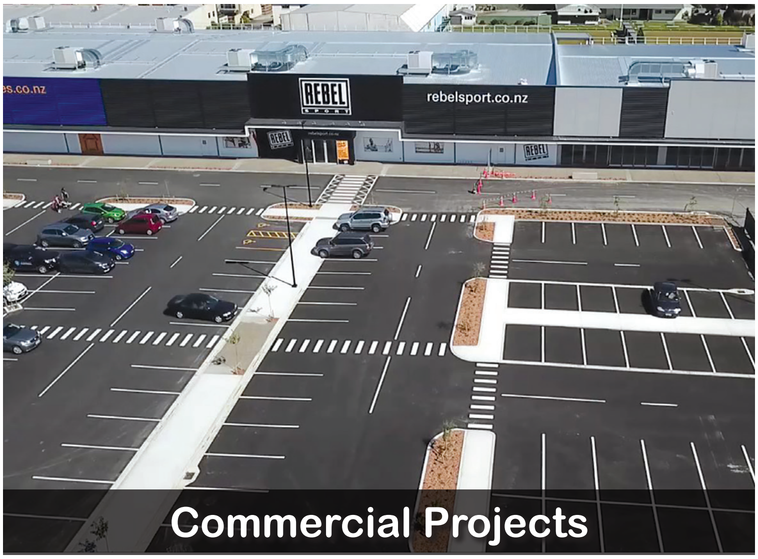

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Wilkins quarry house

Building beyond style

Ian Cattoën-Gilbert on honest, human-centred architecture

By Ben O'Connell

Totem Studio Architects marked 100 years of contributing to New Zealand's architectural history in 2022. Director Ian Cattoën-Gilbert encourages Kiwis to build their homes to reflect how they truly live, rather than chasing fleeting trends.

As an architect, Ian's known for working with well-known practices nationwide and has an international portfolio across a number of architectural typologies. When asked, he says he doesn't have an applied brand; his approach is centred on people, not a fixed aesthetic.

He says he responds to each client and site uniquely. "I don't even like to use the word 'style' as it preconceives an idea of knowing what you're doing before you even do it. At times, an architect's style can be found through repetition in their work, and that style becomes theirs, but I suggest maybe talking about it with the client first."

Ian replaces style with response and says that many things impact how an architect tends to tackle project briefs: personal values, upbringing, cultural influences, sustainable practices, financial perspective, and the list goes on. "Lots of architects are very practical; others are more fixed in expressing something personally. I see a spectrum between artistic and practical tendencies. Your approach might delight some clients and terrify others. It's about personal fit."

He adds that his own design values are rooted in honesty. "I don't like fakery or applied cosmetics," he says. "Where possible, steel should look like steel, concrete should look like concrete, and timber should express itself naturally. If a client wants a veneer or imitation material, of course, we make it work, but I'll always advocate for materials that speak their own language."

He says that when working in residential design, what's really of value is what makes a home feel good. Kiwis building their dream homes might desire a showstopper that echoes the grandeur and excellence of award-winning builds so often portrayed in magazines. Still, Ian believes the real focus should be designing for both your lived and ideal lifestyle — with drama and interest following naturally.

A well-known example is the Eiffel Tower, which was initially hated and labelled an eyesore. Now a symbol of French culture, a centrepiece celebrating progress, it profoundly meets what was asked of it and conveys its site well. "It's really invoking, and everyone is drawn to it. It's a focal point of inspiration and enjoyment," Ian says. "It was designed to be temporary, but imagine if it were destroyed now."

Pacific Radiology
Pacific radiology interior

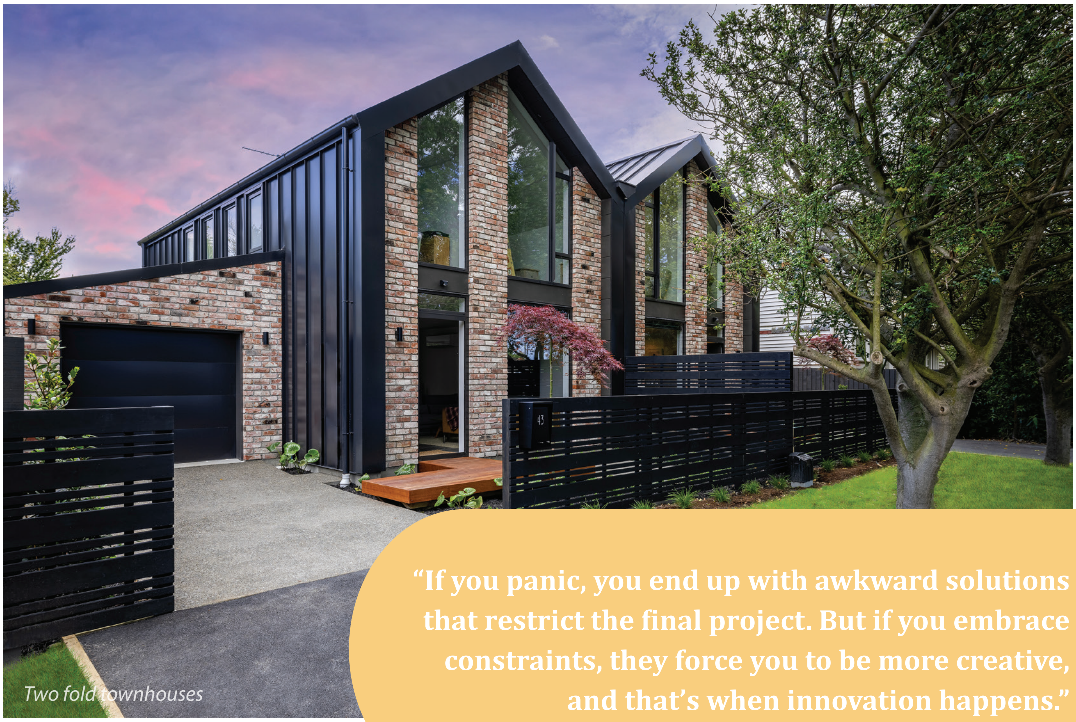
"In workplace design, I get a lot of push-back on open plan offices. It is definitely an effective solution, but productivity should be the driver, not cutting costs by delivering a small floor area. Making open plan work is about full user understanding and buy-in; otherwise, those seated around the design meeting room table might deliver a product that their employees hate if nobody talks to the users in between. It's about intention. It's about process. How are you actually working?"

In designing a home, he remarks that life in a style-driven, heavily glazed house might get a bit old after a couple of months. "Houses should reflect how you live, not a desired number of bedrooms or an open-plan living room size. Sculpt the building around your lifestyle instead of trying to force a lifestyle."

Caring about client wants and needs is what makes a 'starchitect'. A starchitect should be someone who does their job really well, and sometimes they aren't the same thing, Ian says. Sometimes it takes work to show a client how their needs differ from the initial brief they gave. Sometimes other issues arise that prompt change, such as shortages, budgets, site conditions, and life events.

Ian also stresses that good architecture is rarely the product of a lone visionary. "It's a team game," he says. "You can't always be uncompromising. You have to be willing to pivot, to work with the builder, the engineer, the client, and everyone else on-site."

He recalls an expensive stairwell install where the answer to cost concerns wasn't simply to build cheaper stairs, but to find creative alternatives within budget that still delivered the aspirations the client and team had for the build. "It's about finding other solutions. In projects, especially with huge teams on-site, this leads to innovation and problems solved.


Two fold townhouses

> **"If you panic, you end up with awkward solutions that restrict the final project. But if you embrace constraints, they force you to be more creative, and that's when innovation happens."**
>
> *- Director Ian Cattoën-Gilbert*

"The goal is the best outcome at the end, and knowing you got through it all is what matters; that the client's wants and needs were captured. You almost have to understand their needs more than they do. Surpassing their aspirations and going above and beyond for the client is the sign of a job well done."

Constraints, he adds, often drive creativity. "If you panic, you end up with awkward solutions that restrict the final project. But if you embrace constraints, they force you to be more creative, and that's when innovation happens."

He believes the natural environment largely informs the most inspirational New Zealand architecture. Think about how cliffside baches and lush forests fill design magazines. Ian says that an emotionally connected residential architect tends to respond strongly to the climate and surroundings.

"In urban settings, there is less pull from the landscape, but that's still a space the client will inhabit. This plot is where they've chosen to live. How do you map out life in this space?"

He says that cool urban houses are the innovative ones on small sites. They might have found unique ways of putting joinery and furniture together, or created nooks and spaces that work specifically for how they live. "It's about occupying the space, your space, and how you live in it."

The future of New Zealand architecture depends on how valued architects continue to be, Ian says. "I'm optimistic, but an underappreciation of our full value is currently trending. Some people just don't appreciate the architect's role. Imagery is the focus now, not the project coordination or problem-solving. The truth is, architects are the glue in the middle of the project, the epicentre of all the working elements. When I think of our design teams, who aren't we connected to?"

When asked what advice he'd give to budding architects, Ian doesn't hesitate. "Figure out what kind of architect you want to be: do you want to be a solo designer, or part of a bigger machine? Early in your career, you're negotiating your values, learning where you fit, and you need to expect setbacks. But you've got to keep the fire in you. At its heart, architecture is about creativity and problem-solving."

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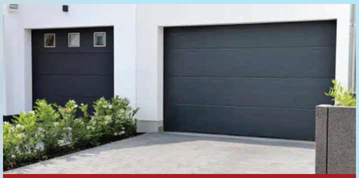

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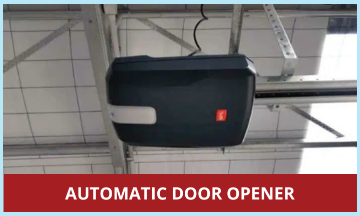

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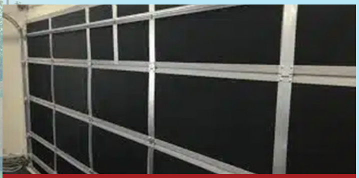

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More than a carpark

By Ben O'Connell

What is a garage, anyway? Ikea's latest Life at Home report found that 93% of New Zealand's garages are carpeted and used as a multipurpose room. Maximising your garage space doesn't have to mean buying new furniture. With a little creativity, you can transform your garage into a stylish and versatile area.

Start with a clean slate

Before the up-do, have a clear-out. Remove old boxes, broken tools, and items you no longer need. Sweep, mop, or pressure-wash floors and wipe down surfaces to create a fresh starting point. Decluttering not only makes your garage look bigger but also helps you visualise the space. Consider donating, selling, or recycling unused items, and take the chance to inspect floors for cracks or dampness. Consider durable epoxy or rubber mats to protect surfaces and make cleaning easier.

Think vertically

Garages often have limited floor space, so use vertical storage to your advantage. Wall-mounted shelves, pegboards, and hooks can hold tools, bicycles, and seasonal items, freeing up valuable floor area. Overhead storage racks are ideal for storing bulky or rarely used items, such as camping gear or holiday decorations. Adding power outlets along walls and task lighting above work areas makes vertical zones functional for projects. Magnetic strips, hanging baskets, and wall hooks can store small tools and supplies, making items instantly visible and easy to grab. By thinking vertically, you maintain a tidy, uncluttered floor while still keeping everything accessible.

Zone your space

Create dedicated areas for vehicles, DIY projects, sports gear, or laundry, if needed. Clearly defined zones make it easier to find items and maintain organisation. Use rugs, markings, or furniture placement to visually separate areas. This approach also helps prevent clutter from spreading across the garage. Proper ventilation in each zone prevents dampness, and windows or vents can improve airflow for workshop activities. Zoning makes your garage versatile, allowing it to serve multiple purposes without becoming chaotic.

Store smart

Smart storage, such as transparent bins, labelled containers, and stackable crates, helps you see and reach what you need quickly. Use small containers for screws, nails, and other hardware to avoid a mess. This approach also keeps the kids safe as hazards are out of reach. Incorporating wall-mounted racks, overhead shelving, and modular drawer systems ensures every tool has a place, while soundproofing options keep noise down if using power tools. Smart storage saves time, reduces clutter, and makes your garage feel deliberately arranged rather than improvised.

Maintain a system

Even the best garage design can fall apart without regular upkeep. Keep to your zones and refresh regularly. Labelled containers and clear zones make it easy for everyone in your household to follow the system. A well-kept garage can be a theft magnet; adding security features such as high-quality locks, motion-sensor lights, or a camera system safeguards tools and seasonal gear. Routine checks on lighting, shelving, and flooring help you catch small issues before they become costly repairs. By embedding these habits into your routine, your garage will stay organised, functional, and stylish all year round.

> **Create dedicated areas for vehicles, DIY projects, sports gear, or laundry, if needed. Clearly defined zones make it easier to find items and maintain organisation.**

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Designing spaces with heart and style

By Jamie Quinn

Kaitiake Lodge, Waiheke Island. Taken by Peter Rees Photography

For Kath Preston, creativity has alwwything that caught her interest. "I am a naturally creative person with a deep love for anything related to design," she says.

Her path into interiors started in a place you might not expect: The World of Wearable Arts. In 2010, she entered the competition and was named runner-up in her category. From there, she lent her skills to costumes for Showbiz performances and got hands-on with building and refurbishing several of her own homes. "This led me towards interior design, where I found great satisfaction in working with different spaces and a variety of materials, especially hard finishes and the cohesive schemes that bring an interior together."

Kath's style isn't just the result of formal training; it's been shaped by years of creative problem-solving and plenty of real-world experience. "The biggest influence on my career in interior design has been my enduring passion for all things design, combined with the experience and knowledge gained from personal projects and my dedication to finding the right solutions for clients," she says. "Creating spaces that clients genuinely love fuels my inspiration." That personal connection to each project is at the heart of how she works.

Kath doesn't believe in one-size-fits-all interiors. "I believe that a home should be a true reflection of its owner," she says. Her process starts with listening—really listening—to clients, understanding how they live, and figuring out what will make their space not only look good, but feel right. "By listening closely and partnering throughout the process, I strive to craft beautiful spaces that embody my clients' individual styles, enhance their lifestyles, and respect their budgets." That means no cookie-cutter solutions. Instead, each project becomes its own creative journey.

Kath's inspiration doesn't just come from design magazines (though she loves those too). "To keep my creativity fresh between projects, I am always on the lookout for new materials and emerging

Redcliffs renovation. Taken by Anna McLeod Photography ideas. Inspiration comes from magazines, my surroundings, and especially from places I visit while on holiday."

Travel, she says, is one of the best ways to see spaces differently and bring that fresh perspective back to her work.

Ask Kath what trends she's enjoying at the moment, and she doesn't hesitate. "I'm excited about the growing popularity of textured walls, using wood panelling, wallpaper, or decorative plaster," she says. She's also a big fan of bringing the outdoors in, with "interesting indoor plants and ample light," and mixing "contemporary pieces with unique vintage and antique items for added character."

New build in Parklands. Taken by Anna McLeod Photography

When it comes to colour, she's seeing more "earthy tones: soft ochre, sage greens, and warm terracotta," along with clever built-in storage solutions.

As for what's on the way out? "There is a move away from stark minimalism and all-white spaces towards bolder, more personalised, textured and nature-inspired looks."

Sometimes, a room just needs one simple update to feel new again. "Painting walls and woodwork in a fresh neutral colour is one of the quickest and most effective ways to give a space a modern update," Kath says. It's a change that's affordable, achievable, and instantly lifts a space.

Kath isn't afraid to challenge the idea that you have to stick to certain design rules. "Timeless design isn't about following every trend. It is about creating a home that truly represents you, your goals, values, and lifestyle. Always trust your instincts."

While she appreciates the balance symmetry brings, she knows too much can make a room feel predictable. "Mixing things up with varied art sizes, adding antique furniture, interesting artistic pieces, contrasting colours or organic shapes introduces asymmetry, visual interest and a livelier atmosphere."

If a full renovation isn't on the cards, Kath has a simple solution. "Swap out bedding, cushions, and throws and use deeper colours for winter and lighter shades for summer," she suggests. "Many retailers offer affordable, good-quality soft furnishings, so don't hesitate to experiment and mix things up for a fresh look."

> "There is a move away from stark minimalism and all-white spaces towards bolder, more personalised, textured and nature-inspired looks."

Kaitiake Lodge, Waiheke Island. Taken by Peter Rees Photography

Kath's work with Two Birds Design is about creating homes that feel like they truly belong to the people who live in them. Her background, from wearable art to interiors, has given her a unique perspective, one that blends creativity, practicality, and a deep respect for her clients' individuality.

"A home should be a true reflection of its owner," she says. And for Kath, that's not just a design philosophy, it's the reason she does what she does.

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What really sets Hennessy Construction apart is their personalised service. They're not about rushing projects or cutting corners. Instead, they focus on building lasting relationships and homes that stand the test of time.

Their close-knit team of qualified builders and apprentices ensures each project runs smoothly, and they're always happy to answer questions or walk you through the next steps.

Clients often comment on how easy the process feels, thanks to clear timelines, upfront costings, and regular updates. It's that open, friendly approach that has earned them repeat business and word-of-mouth recommendations throughout the region.

Hennessy Construction also partners with some of the Bay's most trusted subcontractors, ensuring the wider team shares their values of quality workmanship and respect on-site. From the foundations to the finishing touches, their work speaks for itself.

So, whether you're planning your dream home, giving your current one a new lease on life, or starting a commercial fit-out, Hennessy Construction makes it simple. They bring the skills, the experience, and the down-to-earth attitude that makes all the difference.

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Tile & error

Tiles are one of those materials that can be overlooked during the planning stage, but they play a huge role in how a space performs, not just how it looks.

Whether you're working on a residential build, a commercial fit-out, or a large public facility, choosing the right tile for the right environment can make or break a project. With so many options available, it pays for contractors to be knowledgeable about the basic types of tile, what they're best suited for, and what to watch out for when installing them.

Let's break down the main types of tile you're likely to come across and how to use them wisely.

Ceramic Tiles

Ceramic tiles are among the most widely used due to their affordability and versatility. They are made from clay, fired at lower temperatures than porcelain, and typically come glazed.

Best suited for: Indoor walls and low-traffic floors (e.g., residential bathrooms and kitchens).

Pros: Cost-effective, easy to cut and install.

Cons: Less durable and more porous than porcelain.

Porcelain Tiles

Denser and fired at higher temperatures, porcelain tiles offer greater water resistance and durability. Available in glazed or full-bodied varieties.

Best suited for: High-traffic floors, commercial spaces, wet areas, and outdoor use (when textured for slip resistance).

Pros: Highly durable, water-resistant, low maintenance.

Cons: More difficult to cut and often more expensive.

Natural Stone Tiles

Including marble, granite, slate, limestone, and travertine, stone tiles offer a premium finish and unique look, but require more maintenance.

Best suited for: High-end residential, feature walls, commercial lobbies, and exterior use, depending on stone type.

Pros: Visually striking, durable if sealed properly.

Cons: Requires sealing, variation in quality, and higher installation cost.

Mosaic Tiles

Small tiles (often glass, stone, or ceramic) mounted on mesh sheets, mosaics are often used for decorative or detailed work. Best suited for: Splashbacks, shower niches, pool areas, and accents.

Pros: Flexible design applications, easy to apply to curved surfaces.

Cons: Time-consuming to install; grout lines may be more difficult to clean.

Cement Tiles

Handmade tiles are gaining popularity for patterned designs, especially in boutique commercial settings.

Best suited for: Interior floors and walls, where design impact is a priority.

Pros: Durable, visually unique.

Cons: Porous, needs sealing, can be prone to staining.

Technical considerations:

- **Slip ratings:** In any space where water or spills are likely, e.g. bathrooms, kitchens, entranceways, or outdoor walkways, slip resistance is non-negotiable. The New Zealand Building Code (NZBC) outlines requirements for slip resistance depending on the environment and use. Choosing tiles with the correct surface finish and certified slip rating is essential, especially in commercial or public settings where safety liabilities come into play. It's important to look at the R-rating or P-rating system, depending on your supplier, and make sure the tile surface isn't too smooth underfoot.
- **Water absorption:** Moisture is one of the biggest enemies of tiling. Porcelain tiles are a good choice in high-moisture zones due to their low porosity. They absorb less than 0.5% of water, making them ideal for wet areas, outdoor patios, or places subject to freeze-thaw cycles. In contrast, ceramic and natural stone tiles are often more porous and may require extra protection like waterproof membranes beneath the surface or a sealing product applied after installation. Ignoring water absorption rates can lead to issues like mould, efflorescence, or tile delamination.
- **Substrate preparation:** Even the best tile won't perform well on a poor surface. The substrate must be flat, stable, clean, and dry before tiling begins. Different tiles have different tolerances, so larger-format tiles, for example, demand a higher degree of flatness to prevent lipping or cracking. If the surface moves or flexes, the tile job won't

> **Tiles may seem like a design element, but they're a practical consideration involving compliance, longevity, and performance.**

last, and rectifying that after installation is far more costly than doing the prep right the first time.

- **Adhesives and grouts:** Not all adhesives and grouts are created equal, and using the wrong one can compromise the entire installation. Contractors should use adhesive products suited to the tile type and substrate. Flexible adhesives are crucial for underfloor heating or timber substrates, where movement is more likely. Epoxy grout is worth considering in commercial kitchens, food prep areas, or high-moisture environments because it's water-resistant, stain-resistant, and chemically durable.
- **Movement joints:** Tiled surfaces need room to breathe. Thermal expansion, substrate movement, and structural shifts can all put stress on tile installations, especially over large floor areas. Without proper movement joints, tiles can crack or lift over time. Movement joints, either along perimeters, at transitions, or set intervals within large tiled expanses, help accommodate this stress. These joints must be flexible and compliant with industry standards.

Tiles may seem like a design element, but they're a practical consideration involving compliance, longevity, and performance. Choosing the right type of tile for the job isn't just about what looks good, it's also about knowing what will last, stay safe, and meet client and code expectations

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Your home, your castle

Why compliance matters more than ever

A home is more than just walls and a roof. It is the place where families seek comfort, safety, and well-being, their castle in the truest sense. Yet a healthy, functional home does not happen by chance. It is built through careful planning, compliant systems, and thoughtful design that prioritises health, security, and long-term resilience.

At the heart of a functional home is compliance. Plumbing that meets current standards ensures clean, safe water and prevents the unseen risks of leaks and contamination. Whiteware appliances, from dishwashers to washing machines, are no longer just conveniences; they are much-needed tools that keep a household running efficiently. By choosing energy-efficient, fully compliant models, families not only reduce their bills but also limit exposure to avoidable hazards.

A healthy living environment depends heavily on proper climate regulation. Whether through heat pumps, ventilation systems, or insulation, maintaining stable indoor air quality is crucial. A warm, dry home prevents mould growth, reduces airborne contaminants, and supports overall wellbeing. Paired with double glazing, these measures ensure energy efficiency while protecting the family from the extremes of New Zealand's weather.

Safety also extends outdoors. Pools and spas can be the centre of family enjoyment, but without fully compliant covers and fencing, they pose real risks. Meeting safety regulations is not a box-ticking exercise; it's about protecting lives, particularly the youngest members of the household.

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Every feature of a home, from the windows to the water supply, contributes to an environment that is either safe and supportive or vulnerable and unhealthy. By investing in compliance and modern solutions, homeowners can create more than just a structure; they build a space where families can thrive, secure in the knowledge that their health and safety are prioritised.

A home should be a refuge, free from contaminants, secure against risks, and designed to support the everyday needs of those who live within it. For homeowners, builders, and renovators alike, the challenge and responsibility remain the same: to ensure that every house is not just built, but built right. Because when it comes to your family's wellbeing, nothing less than a healthy, fully functional home will do.

> **A home should be a refuge, free from contaminants, secure against risks, and designed to support the everyday needs of those who live within it.**

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Canterbury's coastal gem

Encompassing 13,745 sq km from the Rangitata River in the north to the Waitaki River in the south and framed by the peaks of the Southern Alps to the east, South Canterbury offers a strong and diverse regional economy.

The jewel in South Canterbury's crown is Timaru, nestled comfortably in the mainland about halfway between Christchurch and Dunedin.

With a booming economy, excellent medical and educational facilities, a vibrant and enterprising business sector, an abundance of sporting and recreational facilities and a friendly community, this coastal haven offers so much more than a central stopover.

The region offers a fantastic place to invest, build a business, visit and enjoy family life.

A great place for business and living

Timaru District's central South Island location makes it an ideal spot.

To the north, Christchurch is only two hours' drive away, while 2.5 hours to the south is Dunedin. Well serviced by road, rail, sea, air and enviable digital connectivity, the Timaru District is nationally and internationally connected in a way many other areas can only hope for.

State Highway 1 dissects the district, from north to south and PrimePort Timaru nestles on the edge of the CBD, along with the main trunk railway line - all making for fast and efficient access to a variety of distribution networks.

Timaru is connected via a twice-daily service to New Zealand's capital, Wellington.

Timaru District is home to a variety of market-leading businesses and industries, which demonstrate a high level of forward thinking, coupled with a "can-do" attitude.

From technology to logistics to education, the district has some of the best resources readily available and expansive capabilities to fully support and service the local industry. Globally recognised production and manufacturers, including McCain Foods and Fonterra, have a significant presence in the Timaru District.

Businesses or individuals interested in looking at the opportunities in the Timaru District can contact Aoraki Development for assistance and introductions.

Timaru District lifestyle

- The average commute in Timaru is 5-10 minutes
- Timaru is home of the world famous Trevor Griffiths Rose Garden at Caroline Bay
- Caroline Bay was voted in NZ's top 10 favourite family beaches 2017, by AA Traveller
- Timaru District is under two-hours from snow to surf - four ski areas are less than two hours' drive from your doorstep here. (Dobson, Roundhill, Fox Peak, Ohau). Or you can take a surf: check out the Lighthouse reef, just 20-minute drive from central Timaru
- Temperature & Sunshine hours - Timaru's January mean summer maximum temperature (recorded by the MetService is 21.5 degrees, with a mean annual 1817 sunshine hours.
- Central location – Timaru District is just two hours' drive from Christchurch, 2.5 hours' drive from Dunedin, 2.5 hours to Aoraki Mt Cook village.
- NZ's most significant collection of Maori Rock Art can be found at Te Ana Maori Rock Art Centre, in downtown Timaru, with visual displays and tours available to sites in the region.

Timaru fast facts

- The urban hub of the Timaru District, population 29,000
- Situated midpoint on the South Island's east coast between Christchurch and Dunedin, approximately two hour's drive from each
- Significant manufacturing, processing, engineering and construction, with associated representation across related service sectors
- Regional branches of major banks, service institutions and Government agencies
- Central distribution point for road, rail and sea, local airport with regular flights to Wellington with connections around New Zealand
- 100 percent Ultra Fast Broadband Fibre (UFB) rollout
- Wide selection of chain and department stores plus locally owned retail outlets
- Known for its close, easy access to a huge range of outdoor recreation
- First class education from preschool to tertiary
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- World class sporting facilities.

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Raising the standard

Photos supplied by: Christchurch City Business Association

When it comes to building or renovating in Christchurch and the wider Canterbury region, cutting corners just isn't worth it.

Whether it's a seasoned project manager juggling timelines, a homeowner planning a dream renovation, or a developer with a bold vision, the success of any project hinges on the quality of the people behind it.

From builders and architects to tradespeople, designers, engineers, and product suppliers, every player in the process plays a vital role. And in a region like Canterbury, where climate, terrain, and post-quake regulations add extra layers of complexity, having the right team matters more than ever.

Christchurch has undergone major transformation over the last decade, bringing with it exciting opportunities but also a heightened responsibility. What began as a recovery effort has

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evolved into an opportunity to rethink how we design and build for the future. Homes and buildings in this region need to be smarter, safer, and more sustainable. That's where high-quality product and service providers come into their own. It's not just about getting the job done, it's about getting it done properly, efficiently, and with lasting impact.

Fortunately, Canterbury is home to some of the country's most skilled and forward-thinking professionals. But choosing who to trust remains a challenge, particularly when every business claims to be the best. That's why experience, proven results, and a solid reputation are key. The best providers don't just deliver what's asked, they offer insight, suggest better ways of doing things, and help make life easier for everyone involved.

Strong relationships are just as important as skill. A good provider is both a contractor and a collaborator. Someone who listens, communicates clearly, and works alongside their clients to achieve the best possible outcome. In an industry where surprises and challenges are inevitable, working with dependable people makes all the difference.

At the end of the day, good outcomes come from great partnerships. The difference between a decent result and an exceptional one often lies in who's doing the work, how well they understand the brief, and how committed they are to quality. When the right providers are in place, every stage of the process — from design through to completion — becomes more seamless.

Whether it's a new build, a major development, or a simple room refresh, choosing the right people is key. Christchurch and Canterbury have the talent. Now's the time to keep putting it to good use.

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Managing asbestos safely

What every property owner should know

Asbestos remains New Zealand's number one work-related killer. Although it was banned from importation in 2016, its legacy remains in thousands of homes, schools, and public buildings built or renovated before the 1990s. According to WorkSafe New Zealand, over 220 people die every year from asbestos-related diseases such as mesothelioma, asbestosis, and lung cancer.

For property owners, employers, and contractors, this legacy entails significant responsibilities. Under the Health and Safety at Work (Asbestos) Regulations 2016, anyone who manages or controls a workplace, including schools and public buildings, must ensure asbestos is identified and, if necessary, managed or removed.

Asbestos management plans

This includes the requirement to develop an asbestos management plan for any property likely to contain the substance. The plan must identify known or assumed asbestos, detail how it will be monitored, and outline procedures to control exposure risks. If any asbestos-related work is to be carried out, it must be done by a licensed asbestos removalist, particularly when dealing with friable asbestos or high-risk removal jobs.

WorkSafe emphasises that not all asbestos needs to be removed immediately. In many cases, if the material is undamaged and in good condition, it can be safely managed in place through regular inspections and clear labelling. However, if the asbestos is deteriorating or located in a high-use area, removal may be the safest option.

Managing asbestos with education

Training is also a key part of managing asbestos risk. People who may come into contact with it must receive proper training on asbestos awareness. This ensures they understand what asbestos looks like, where it may be found, and how to avoid disturbing it.

Finally, strict notification and disposal procedures must be implemented. Work involving asbestos removal must be notified to WorkSafe at least 5 days in advance, and all removed materials must be disposed of at approved hazardous waste facilities.

With the right expertise and guidance from licensed professionals, the risk posed by asbestos can be effectively managed, keeping your community, staff, and visitors safe now and into the future.

Whether you're overseeing a school, restoring a heritage site, or renovating an older home, understanding your legal obligations is essential. With the right expertise and guidance from licensed professionals, the risk posed by asbestos can be effectively managed, keeping your community, staff, and visitors safe now and into the future.

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The benefits of natural bamboo flooring

Bamboo flooring has evolved a long way from its initial use as a flooring covering or overlay, which has been used throughout Asia for centuries.

Ecologically friendly

Bamboo is made from natural vegetation. The bamboo plant is a highly renewable resource that is able to grow to maturity in as little as three to five years. This is much faster than hardwood trees which can take upwards of 20 years or more to reach maturity.

Easy maintenance

Bamboo is relatively easy to maintain. You just have to sweep or microfibre dust mop it regularly to remove small particle debris. You clean it with a light spray of water or use a hardwood or bamboo floor cleanser.

Natural material

The use of natural materials is an important trend in the construction industry.
As people are becoming more ecologically conscious, they are demanding products which reflect these values and seeking materials and designs that reject the modern 'cookie-cutter' world, instead focussing on individual personality and natural evolution.

Dent resistance

In terms of resistance to dents caused by footwear and the like, Bamboo flooring is unsurpassed by any hardwood, being twice as dent resistant as oak and significantly stronger than jarrah, which is widely recognised as the strongest hardwood.

Style

Bamboo is a trendy flooring material that can elevate the elegance of a space almost instantly. It has an appearance and a feel that is similar to hardwood and yet, is still distinct and different.

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Owned and operated by local Dan Hamilton, the business was born in 2020 during a career pivot sparked by fatherhood and the COVID-19 pandemic. What started as a side hustle quickly became a full-time passion, with Dan building a reputation for friendly service, thorough results, and down-to-earth professionalism.

Southern Lakes Waterblasting offers a wide range of exterior cleaning services, including house soft washing, roof cleaning and treatments, moss and lichen removal, driveway and path waterblasting, solar panel cleaning, wood deck restoration and staining, concrete sealing, and more.

They use biodegradable, eco-friendly products and operate with strict safety training and top-tier equipment. Dan and his small team are fully certified in working at heights and handling cleaning agents, so you know your property is in safe hands.

Their approach is equal parts practical and personable. You'll get honest advice, a fair quote, and a job well done with no shortcuts. And with glowing reviews to back it up, it's clear that Southern Lakes Waterblasting is a trusted name in the community.

If you're after reliable, local service with results that last, Southern Lakes Waterblasting is the team to call. For a free quote, call Dan on 0800 BLAST IT or visit southernlakeswaterblasting.co.nz. It's time to love the look of your property again.

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Timeless timber for local floors

As Queenstown continues to revel in a wave of high-end residential builds and thoughtful renovations, timber flooring has emerged as a defining feature in many new interiors. With homeowners seeking natural textures and long-lasting materials, suppliers are seeing steady interest in premium wood flooring options tailored to the region's distinctive climate and design preferences.

One company responding to this demand is Vienna Woods, which specialises in European timber flooring and offers a wide selection of engineered and solid options to suit contemporary and character homes alike. From oak parquet patterns to wide-plank boards, Vienna Woods supplies timber flooring to Queenstown with a focus on quality, sustainability, and design longevity.

The company's range includes timber specifically chosen for alpine environments, where humidity shifts and temperature changes require stable, well-engineered solutions.

Homeowners and architects alike are opting for oak in warm tones, matte finishes, and textured surfaces to achieve a balance between durability and design character.

A notable offering within the range is Vienna Woods' collection of recycled timber flooring in NZ, which features antique oak reclaimed from historic European buildings. These boards bring authentic patina and aged detailing to new builds, often chosen for their ability to introduce warmth and a sense of permanence to contemporary interiors.

Oak Pureline flooring

With sample packs available and consultation support offered locally, Queenstown clients are increasingly turning to suppliers like Vienna Woods to deliver both aesthetic appeal and performance. As natural materials continue to play a central role in home design, timber remains a go-to option for those looking to combine practicality with timeless style.

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Mapping Otago’s exposure to natural hazards

A report released by the Otago Regional Council (ORC) marks a major step forward in understanding how communities across Otago are exposed to natural hazards such as flooding, earthquakes, landslides, and tsunamis.

The Otago Region Natural Hazards Exposure Analysis is the region’s first comprehensive assessment of where people, buildings, and critical facilities may be situated in areas potentially affected by one or more natural hazard types.

The ORC’s manager of natural hazards, Dr Jean-Luc Payan says, “This analysis provides a regional-scale, data-driven snapshot that will help guide how we prioritise future resilience projects and hazard investigations.

The report covers the entire Otago region and assesses exposure to nine key natural hazard types using regional-scale mapping and modelling datasets. It estimates the number of people, buildings, and critical community facilities (such as hospitals and emergency services) located in areas which may be exposed to natural hazards.

Following presentation to council, work can begin prioritising areas and hazard types of most concern, working with communities, city and district councils to develop strategies to reduce risk.

Key findings:

- River and lake flooding and liquefaction hazard types have the greatest exposure, with over 30,000 people and buildings potentially exposed to each hazard process
- Of the urban areas in the region, Dunedin City has the highest overall exposure, particularly to flooding, liquefaction and seismic hazards
- The Queenstown, Wanaka and Dunedin City urban areas have a relatively high exposure to slope stability hazards, such as landslides and alluvial fans
- Coastal hazards, such as tsunamis and storm surges, have a lesser exposure overall (about 500 people and 1,100 buildings), and mainly in the Dunedin City and Clutha district
- There were 90 critical community facilities identified in the region, with the highest exposure of these facilities being for flooding and liquefaction hazard types.

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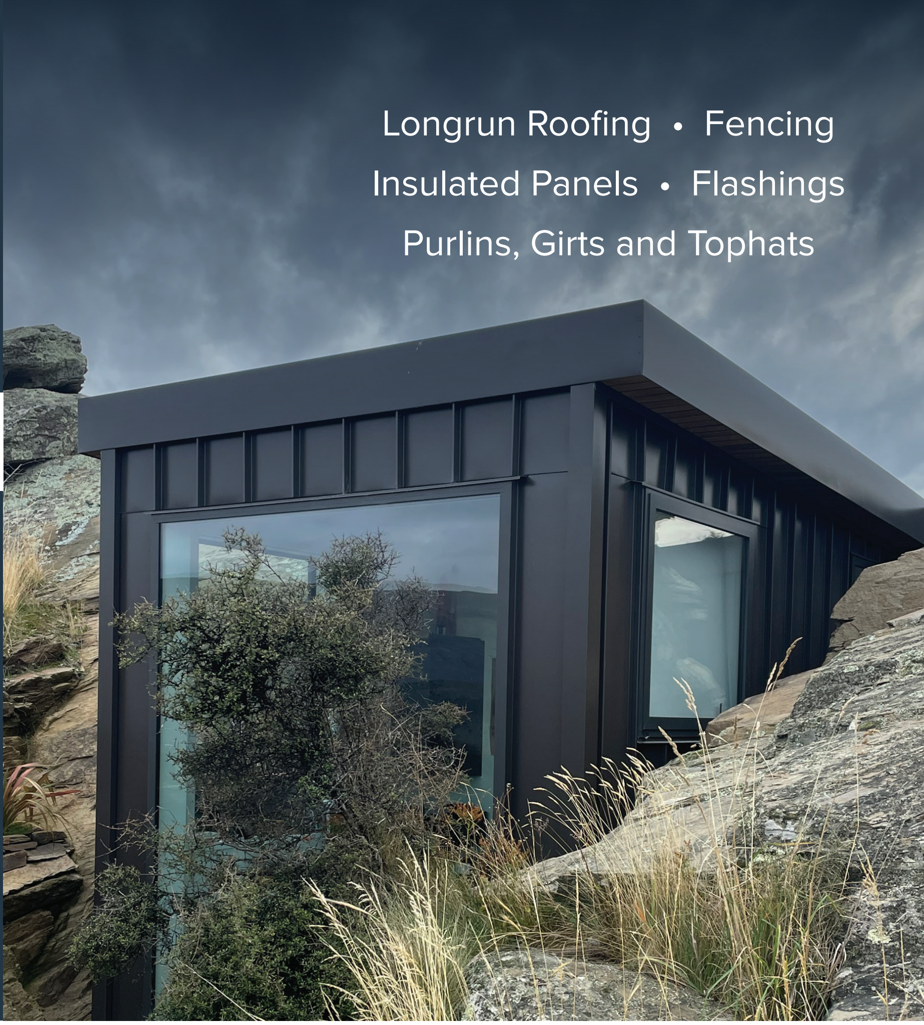

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